

## IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please replace the paragraph appearing at page 1, lines 11-19, with the following amended paragraph.

Nitric oxide (NO) is an unstable radical species of a short life, and has been elucidated to have important functions as a physiological active substance in a living body (Chemistry Today [Gendai Kagaku], April, 1994, Special Edition; Pharmacia, May, 1997, Special Edition). Methods for measuring nitric oxide are roughly classified into indirect methods, which measure  $\text{NO}_2^-$  and  $\text{NO}_3^-$  as oxidative degradation products of nitric oxide, and methods based on direct measurement of nitric oxide. The direct methods have been desired from viewpoints of detection and quantification of nitric oxide under physiological conditions. However, any specific and highly sensitive detection method that can be applied to in vitro systems has not been developed so far.